THE MEMOIRS AND SPEECHES OF JAMES, 2nd EARL WALDEGRAVE, 1742–1763

Edited with an introduction by
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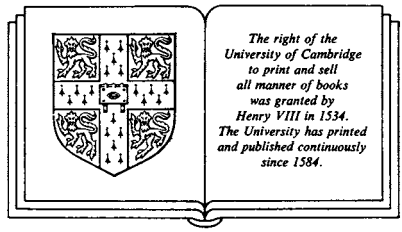

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INTRODUCTION

THE COURT SOCIETY

It is only comparatively recently that English historiography has reluctantly abandoned its old self sufficiency – the idea that England's constitutional development pursued a path so different from that of her continental neighbours that a peculiarly insular *genre*, constitutional history, was necessary to explain its precedents, broadening down, or its teleology, urging it forwards to 'modernity'. In 1905, the foremost continental historian of mid-eighteenth-century England entered a protest against this scheme of interpretation:

> The opinion is widely and generally entertained, that the English state is the purest form of constitutional government, and that it was impressed with this form at a very early date. While other states were labouring under great uncertainty or entire confusion of constitutional form, or were burdened by the weight of despotism, England is supposed to have secured a careful delimitation of spheres of influence and a balance of power between co-existing forces ... I cannot think that things were greatly different in other countries, least of all in Germany ... Utterly false is the opinion that there was at any time in England an equilibrium of different forces with constitutional right above them as a final court of appeal.[1]

Eighteenth-century rhetoric about checks and balances needs to be interpreted, not merely read as a neutral description of a stable and widely accepted regime. The state structure which Whigs defended with this rhetoric proves, on closer inspection, to be very different from that rule-bound, clearly defined system of limited monarchy and cabinet government which we have been too ready to see through the categories

[1] Albert von Ruville, *William Pitt Earl of Chatham* (1905; trans. H. J. Chaytor, 3 vols., London, 1907), vol. 1, pp. 1–3. Sir Herbert Butterfield, in *George III and the Historians* (London, 1957), pp. 172–3, praised von Ruville: 'Since he was a continental historian, he was able to envisage the England of the elder Pitt as an example of the *ancien régime*.'

of Walter Bagehot's *The English Constitution* (1867).[2] Waldegrave's *Memoirs* belong rather to the world of Saint-Simon and Montesquieu, Clarendon and Lord Hervey. Its practical politics revolved around King and nobility; its scale of values was moulded by the theoretical claims of monarchy and aristocracy. These characteristics, shared by many European states in this period, have invited a common label: the Court society.

The Court society has been proposed by one sociologist as a unique formation, intermediate in Europe between feudal society and industrial society.[3] France gave one particular expression to this model by the periodic importance of Versailles as the sole focus of social attention. In England, the same society was divided in its focus between St James's, Kensington and the royal palace of Westminster. In France, Court etiquette was deliberately built up and exploited by one monarch, Louis XIV; in England, a succession of dynasties meant a frequently changing role for the immediate circle of the King within the wider society which revolved around him. Nevertheless, London's dominance within Britain meant that its Court ranked with Paris, Vienna and Madrid as cultural capitals of ancien regime societies. This membership of an international order was affirmed in the abstract by doctrine, in practice by a certain style. Court ceremonial reached its apogee in England in the early and mid-eighteenth century. 'It is impossible for me to make you understand and imagine the pomp and magnificence of this solemn procession,' wrote a foreign observer of the coronation of George II. 'Persons of an advanced age, who have seen the coronations of King James II, of William III and Mary, of Queen Anne, and of King George I, are all agreed that the magnificence of the present coronation has far surpassed that of the preceding.'[4]

This deliberate and ceremonially accentuated focus on the Court did not shield it from criticism. Indeed, the political ills of a Court society could be blamed on its monarch. In 1733, Lord Hervey deplored the growing breach between George II and Frederick, Prince of Wales, and hinted at the worst conceivable outcome, a Stuart restoration: 'this House divided against itself could not stand'. Hervey claimed he said:

> People who make their fortunes under a Prince will submit to be snubbed and ill used; and people who are caressed by a Prince, cajoled with good words, and treated with kindness, will serve him without great hire. But our Master endeav-

[2] For an attempt to differentiate Victorian values from all that went before, and to offer a model which allows England to be seen more clearly in its European setting, see J.C.D. Clark, *Revolution and Rebellion: State and Society in England in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1986)

[3] Norbert Elias, *The Court Society* (trans. Edmund Jephcott, Oxford, 1983).

[4] M. van Muyden (ed.), *A Foreign View of England in the Reigns of George I & George II: The Letters of Monsieur César de Saussure to his Family* (London, 1902), p. 257.

ours by neither of these ways to attach people to his interest; he has not address enough to win them by flattery, nor has he liberality enough to gain by interest. For in no Court was there ever less to be got, though in no Court was there ever more to be done; never was greater attendance expected, nor ever fewer rewards distributed, and though the servants of no King were ever more punctually paid, yet none were ever less satisfied, nobody making a fortune under him, or getting more than just what defrayed the annual expenses of birthday clothes and the other necessary expenses incurred by dangling after a Court. The true state therefore of his case is (as you very well know) that as he cares for nobody, nobody cares for him; and that even his favours are so awkwardly bestowed that he gives without obliging, is served without being respected, and obeyed without being loved.[5]

The Hanoverian experience was very often of a Court divided between St James's and Leicester House; but this very division acted to emphasise, not to diminish, its courtly characteristics. Its most famous division occasioned the *Memoirs* of James, 2nd Earl Waldegrave.

Waldegrave's *Memoirs*, then, record the politics of a society focussed on the Court. Lord Holland, writing an introduction for the 1821 edition, recognised this characteristic but sought to place it in a disparaging perspective; he wrote dismissively of the post of Lord of the Bedchamber, which the 2nd Earl obtained in 1743. John Wilson Croker, reviewing the volume in the *Quarterly*, challenged this interpretation, quoting their editor:

'Such offices were then held in high estimation; they often led to favour and greatness. It was in the spirit of those times to be more greedy of imaginary honours, than obsequious to real power. Noblemen of the first rank sought with avidity employments which their descendants regard with indifference, or reject with disdain, as badges of dependence, rather than marks of distinction or importance.' – *Introduction*, p. viii.

This observation of the editor is very just; and it is not uninteresting, nor foreign from our subject, to examine what may be the cause of such a change – for we do not believe that men, high or low, are more disinterested or less ambitious now than they were a reign or two ago. We are aware that the alteration is attributed *exclusively* to a *spirit of independence*; and that a philosophical indifference to court-favour is considered as one of the results of 'the force of public opinion.' There is some truth in this: the motives and actions of public men, and particularly of those who may be connected with the government, are liable to such misrepresentations – and on the other hand – those who oppose the Court and reject its honours are so naturally the objects of popular applause, that the same vanity which formerly courted the smiles of kings now flatters a more noisy but not a more discriminating or honourable patron.

But there is also another circumstance which has still more tended to lower the rate of such offices as Lords of the Bedchamber – we mean the alteration in the modes of the private life of our sovereigns:- such places gave, as the editor says, in the reign of George II, access to the king's presence and opportunities of intercourse and of influence; but his late Majesty's domestic taste and habits (and probably the

[5] Hervey, *Memoirs*, vol. I, pp. 205, 208.

general influence of the age co-operating with those tastes and habits) induced him to get rid, as much as he could, of the irksome ostentation of his rank, and to live, as far as he might, as a *private gentleman.* One by one, the pride, pomp and circumstances of the *court,* (as it was understood in the times of our grandfathers,) vanished – the royal circle became matter of personal selection rather than of official designation; Lords of the Bedchamber became in fact sinecurists, and they have now no more share in the personal society of the sovereign, and little more access to his person, than any other noblemen: if, 'the descendants of nobleman of the first rank' now despise or reject what their ancestors sought with so much eagerness, it is not, we believe, that they are less vain, or less interested, or less ambitious, but because the places themselves, in the present state of society, can no longer contribute either to vanity, interest or ambition. If the Court of England should ever be re-established on its old principles, and if some future monarch should condemn himself to live the life of a *king,* and to find amongst his *official* servants all the pleasures of his *private society,* we do not doubt that we should see these now disregarded offices rise again into the same kind of request and consideration in which they were held in the time of George II and his predecessors.[6]

The increasing distinction in England between the personal and the public life of the sovereign had already begun in the reign of Charles II; it did not correspond with any widely perceived decline in the role of the Crown after the Hanoverian accession. Certain aspects of English Court etiquette appear indeed to have become more formalised as the century progressed. Although George I abandoned the custom of being dressed by his Bedchamber servants, George II reintroduced it. Ceremonial in the assemblies known as 'drawing rooms' became steadily less informal.[7] Lord Hervey too was struck by the coronation of George II, 'performed with all the pomp and magnificence that could be contrived; the present King differing so much from the last, that all the pageantry and splendour, badges and trappings of royalty, were as pleasing to the son as they were irksome to the father.'[8] The most politically powerful Court office of the century was to be that of Lord Bute, who as Groom of the Stole to the Prince of Wales in 1756–60 and to George III in 1760–1 demonstrated the lasting importance of access to the King.[9] Because the monarch remained the active head of the executive, closely involved in the formulation of policy and the choice of ministers, 'The court was still at the centre of the political world.'[10]

[6] *The Quarterly Review* 25 (1821), pp. 392–3.

[7] John M. Beattie, *The English Court in the Reign of George I* (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 11, 14, 54–5.

[8] Hervey, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, p. 66.

[9] Precedents for Bute's non-accountable position as 'minister behind the curtain' are explored by S.B. Baxter, 'The Age of Personal Monarchy in England', in Peter Gay (ed.), *Eighteenth Century Studies presented to Arthur M. Wilson* (New York, 1972), pp. 3–11.

[10] Beattie, *English Court*, p. 217.

In one symptomatic respect the accession of the House of Hanover strengthened a characteristic which St James's shared with other European courts. Fluency in languages was increasingly at a premium. Above all, command of French was an essential qualification in circles which made little distinction between social and political success. French was not the principal language spoken at St James's, as it was at some European courts; but many English courtiers could switch easily and naturally into French in a way which affirmed their membership of international princely society. Thus George I, knowing little English, often spoke French with his son, mistresses and courtiers;[11] George II did the same, corresponded with Frederick Prince of Wales in French, and (at a moment of high emotion and unconscious humour) resorted to that language at the bedside of the dying Queen Caroline.[12] Language and the cultural ramifications of language, like dress, marked off the members of the Court with considerable clarity from those who failed so to qualify.

If the Court enhanced society's already hierarchical orientation, and if most courtiers were peers or their kin, the third estate was slow to develop institutions to give expression to self-consciously different values. The House of Commons was not yet defined against the House of Lords, as two embodiments of separate and antagonistic interests. In personnel as in values, the links between the two were, as yet, far stronger than their rivalries. Consequently, eighteenth-century Englishmen did not share later historians' preoccupation with the lower House.[13] The power of the peers, collectively and severally, was daily in evidence. Against this power, the House of Commons failed to provide an effective counterpoise partly because it seldom sought to do so. In the short term, only a more independent monarchy seemed to offer such a hope. After the Duke of Devonshire's ignominious exit from his post of Lord Chamberlain in October 1762, Horace Walpole wrote:

> It is very amusing to me to see the House of Lords humbled. I have long beheld their increasing power with concern, and though not at all wishing to see the higher scale proponderating, I am convinced nothing but the Crown can reduce the exorbitance of the peers – and perhaps it will be able; for I believe half those who are proud of twenty thousand pounds a year, will bear anything for a thousand more.[14]

[11] *Diary of Mary Countess Cowper, Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales 1714–1720* (London, 1864), pp. 9–10, 28, 142, 145, 150, 161, 191–2.

[12] Cf. Hervey, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, pp. 271–2; vol. 2, pp. 471, 560, 603, 611–12; vol. 3, pp. 776–84, 802–6, 896, 917. For an impression of this polyglot society in action, see Lord Hervey's miniature dialogue, vol. 2, pp. 585–96.

[13] It seems likely that only the mischance of the deaths of the two peers who dominated politics in the early years of George I's reign (James, 1st Earl Stanhope in 1721; Charles, 3rd Earl of Sunderland in 1722) permitted the domination of the scene by a commoner, Sir Robert Walpole, in subsequent decades.

[14] Walpole to Mann, 9 Nov. 1762: Walpole, *Letters*, vol. 22, p. 95.

The political controversies of early eighteenth-century France are often explained in terms of a rivalry between a *thèse royale*, which stressed the need for a strong monarchical government, and a *thèse nobiliaire* which emphasised the necessity for the checks on that central power which only the aristocracy and the institutions it staffed could provide. In practical terms, this rivalry between crown and nobility was largely played out at Court. In England too, the noisy life of the House of Commons did not greatly reduce the importance of political conflict between a monarchical executive and a legislative dominated by the patrician elite. In France, the Physiocrats evolved a plan for a competitive, free-market society (eliminating feudal rights and restrictions) which could only be held together by an absolute monarch; in England too, the growing professional and commercial sectors of society found themselves largely in alliance with the Court before 1832.

Louis de Rouvroy, Duc de Saint-Simon, the Walter Bagehot of the Court society, was born in 1675 and died in the same year as Montesquieu, 1755. Montesquieu spoke for the professional *noblesse de robe*, Saint-Simon for the warrior *noblesse d'épée*; yet as in England, the code of values to which the men of affairs and the landed elite appealed was virtually identical.[15] This code, which was Waldegrave's, can be reconstructed from the voluminous writings which that society produced. Its most characteristic literary *genre* was the Court memoir. Often written out of revenge by the unsuccessful courtier, driven to redress on paper and in private the thousand slights and humiliations of his public career, this *genre* brought the sensibility of the age to its highest pitch. Thus Saint-Simon became a model for the prose of Marcel Proust, and Horace Walpole exercised an influence on the development of the English novel out of proportion to his impact on the politics of his own day. Indeed, the best memoirs were commonly written by figures of the second rank. As Hervey acknowledged,

> I very freely declare that my part in this drama was only that of the Chorus's in the ancient tragedies, who, by constantly being on the stage, saw everything that was done, and made their own comments upon the scene, without mixing in the action or making any considerable figure in the performance.[16]

Never reaching the highest ranks, never reaping the major rewards, the ordinary courtier was trapped in a world which he found at once fascinating, repulsive, and inescapable. The satirist and minor courtier La Bruyère (1645–96) recognised the dependence which Court life imposed on its followers: 'Nobody is a greater slave than an assiduous courtier, unless it be a courtier who is more assiduous'. His biting irony was directed against

[15] See, especially, Duc de Saint-Simon, *Historical Memoirs* ed. and trans. Lucy Norton (3 vols., London, 1967–72)

[16] Hervey, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, p. 3.

precisely those characteristics of court life which their admirers had found so compelling. Yet even this bitter critic was forced to admit the centrality of the institution for which he felt such distaste: 'Whoever has seen the court has seen the most handsome, the best-looking, and the most decked-out part of the world. He who despises the court after having seen it, despises the world.'[17] He died at Versailles.

La Bruyère's satires were still current, for the world he described survived. Like Saint-Simon, Lord Hervey

> applied to his political life the maxim which he enunciates of his physical one, that existence on any terms is preferable to no existence at all . . . The most painful scenes took place when it became necessary for George II to insist, with the utmost kindness and consideration, on his surrendering his office, and to explain that it was impossible to grant his entreaties to be given some compensation, however small, even if it were only a Lordship of the Bedchamber.[18]

Hervey and Saint-Simon were natural and eager courtiers: they pursued every scrap of status, every minor advantage, and were embittered by their loss of position. Waldegrave was a natural but reluctant courtier: drawn to seek a political career through Court rather than party channels, he found the stresses of court life more repulsive than addictive. Nevertheless, Waldegrave too felt the same keen disappointment at the loss of office, and it was this passion which drove him, like them, to justify himself to posterity.

Waldegrave's *Memoirs* end in disillusion: 'I have been too long behind the Scenes, I have had too near a View of the machinery of a Court, to envy [any] Man either the power of a Minister, or the Favor of Princes'. But disillusion did not mean the end of his political career. He continued to attend at Court; before death intervened in 1763, it had seemed that a new chapter was about to open, and that the highest honours were at last to be his. Like most courtiers, Waldegrave was sceptical of those around him; again like most courtiers, he was unable to free himself from the compelling fascination of the Court.

One reason for his inability to escape was that he lacked an alternative power base in the organisation of a political party. In 1757, Waldegrave warned the King of his unsuitability for the place of First Lord of the Treasury: 'a Minister must expect few Followers, who had never cultivated political Friendships, and had always abhorr'd Party Violence'. Impor-

[17] Jean de La Bruyère, *Les Caractères* (1688; trans. H. van Laun, London, 1963), pp. 133, 139–40.

[18] Romney Sedgwick, Introduction, in Hervey, *Memoirs*, p. lv. Hervey seems to have begun his memoirs in 1733; he died in 1743. Saint-Simon retired from Court life in 1723 and had completed a large part of his manuscript by 1743 (*Memoirs*, vol. 3, p. 493); he died in 1755. The *Memoirs* of Thomas, Earl of Ailesbury (2 vols., Roxburghe Club, London, 1890) were written in 1728–9.

tantly, he disclaimed personal ambition: 'I had no Conception how a reasonable Man, who was not necessitous, could have any Inducement to undergo the Fatigue, and anxiety of a Ministerial Employment, unless he was animated with a probable Expectation, of rendering his King and Country some important Services, and of being afterwards rewarded with that general Approbation, which such Services merited.' The values of the Court society commended disinterested public service and the pursuit of personal honour, not bureaucratic drudgery or political self-aggrandisement. The fount of honour was the Crown. Waldegrave wrote in the *Memoirs* that he 'esteem'd' access to the King 'the only valuable part of a Ministerial Employment'. He exaggerated, and later amended 'only' to 'most'; but he still spoke as a courtier, not a man of business.

What was it that courtiers sought? Lord Hervey was driven to a string of synonyms by contemplating the 'Court interest, power, profit, favour, and preferment' that Sir Robert Walpole almost lost, then regained, at the accession of George II. Success would go to 'those few alert courtiers who, like cautious and skilful sailors, see every cloud as soon as it rises and watch every wind as fast as it changes', so that they could 'set their sails in such a manner as should enable them to shift to the gale that was most favourable, and put them in a readiness to pursue the course they were in or tack about, just as the weather should require, and to that point of the compass where sunshine was most likely to appear.'[19] Waldegrave's career, like Hervey's, illustrates the extreme difficulty of this task in practice.

Waldegrave's self-justification takes its underlying values for granted: the values of the man of honour. In monarchical governments, according to Montesquieu, honour took the place which political virtue filled in republics. *De L'Esprit des Lois* is a sustained eulogy of the nobleman's code of conduct. It was a code

> not taught in colleges or academies. It commences, in some measure, at our setting out in the world; for this is the school of what we call honour, that universal preceptor which ought everywhere to be our guide . . . the education of monarchies requires a certain politeness of behaviour . . . a person that would break through the rules of decency, so as to shock those he conversed with, would lose the public esteem, and become incapable of doing any good . . . Politeness, in monarchies, is naturalised at court. One man excessively great renders everybody else little. Hence that regard which is paid to our fellow-subjects; hence that politeness, equally pleasing to those by whom, as to those towards whom, it is practiced, because it gives people to understand that a person actually belongs, or deserves to belong, to the court . . . There is nothing so strongly inculcated in monarchies, by the laws, by religion and honour, as submission to the prince's will; but this very

[19] Hervey, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, pp. 68, 80.

honour tells us that the prince never ought to command a dishonourable action, because this would render us incapable of serving him.[20]

Essentially the same account was given by Montesquieu's and Waldegrave's friend the 4th Earl of Chesterfield (1694–1773), whose private letters to his son of *c.* 1747–51 proved hugely popular when collected and published in 1774. It was then discovered that he had explicitly recognised the relevance of Montesquieu's description to the English monarchy, despite obvious constitutional differences which Chesterfield even sought to stress. In 1750, Chesterfield thought the similarities sufficiently important to transcribe for his son a long passage from Book 4, chapter 2 of Montesquieu's great work. He explained its importance:

> The President Montesquieu (whom you will be acquainted with at Paris) after having laid down, in his book *de l'Esprit des Lois*, the nature and principles of the three different kinds of government, viz. the democratical, the monarchical, and the despotic, treats of the education necessary for each respective form. His chapter upon the education proper for the monarchical I thought worth transcribing, and sending to you. You will observe that the monarchy which he has in his eye is France ... Though our government differs considerably from the French, inasmuch as we have fixed laws, and constitutional barriers, for the security of our liberties and properties;[21] yet the President's observations hold pretty near as true in England as in France ... the same maxims and manners almost in all Courts; voluptuousness and profusion encouraged, the one to sink the people into indolence, the other into poverty, consequently into dependency. The Court is called the world here, as well as at Paris; and nothing more is meant, by saying that a man knows the world, than that he knows Courts. In all Courts you must expect to meet with connections without friendship, enmities without hatred, honour without virtue, appearances saved, and realities sacrificed; good manners, with bad morals; and all vice and virtue so disguised, that whoever has only reasoned upon both, would know neither, when he first met them at Court. It is well that you should know the map of that country, that when you come to travel in it, you may do it with greater safety.[22]

Chesterfield's tireless insistence to his son on the graces of civilised manners had a specific practical application: they would be essential 'when you go to Courts'. An appropriate reading list (in French) included the *Mémoires* of Cardinal de Retz ('You will there see what Courts and courtiers really are'), La Rochefoucauld's *Les Réflexions Morales* and La Bruyère's *Les Caractères*. Philip Stanhope's itinerary was carefully planned: 'You will

[20] Baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws* (trans. Thomas Nugent, ed. Franz Neumann, New York, 1949), Book 3, chapter 6; Book 4, chapter 2.

[21] Chesterfield had been deeply influenced by the Deism and quasi-republicanism of the 1720s; his writings abound with stock phrases in contempt of 'popery' and 'arbitrary rule'. This blocked a deeper understanding of the similarities between the French and English governments, despite his grasp of the other features which those societies shared.

[22] Chesterfield, *Letters*, vol. 4, p. 1553.

now, in the course of a few months, have been rubbed at three of the considerable Courts of Europe – Berlin, Dresden and Vienna; so that I hope you will arrive at Turin tolerably smooth, and fit for the last polish.'[23]

In England as on the continent, the Court sustained its own style and its own preoccupations:

> There is a sort of chit-chat, or *small-talk*, which is the general run of conversation at Courts, and in most mixed companies. It is a sort of middling conversation, neither silly nor edifying; but, however, very necessary for you to be master of. It turns upon the public events of Europe, and then is at its best; very often upon the number, the goodness, or badness, the discipline, or the clothing of the troops of different princes; sometimes upon the families, the marriages, the relations of princes, and considerable people; and sometimes, *sur la bonne chère*, the magnificence of public entertainments, balls, masquerades etc.

Mastery of these subjects was insufficient without a certain manner:

> more people have made great figures and great fortunes in Courts by their exterior accomplishments than by their interior qualifications. Their engaging address, the politeness of their manners, their air, their turn, has almost always paved the way for their superior abilities, if they have such, to exert themselves. They have been favourites before they have been ministers.

The detailed instructions to which Philip Stanhope was subjected were universally applicable: 'With these qualifications . . . I will answer for your success, not only at Hanover, but at any Court in Europe.'[24]

Montesquieu's account of the principles of monarchy owed much to the greater priority he ascribed to the nobility. James, 2nd Earl Waldegrave, a Hanoverian loyalist from a lately Jacobite family, took especial note of Book 26, chapter 16 of *De l'Esprit des Lois* in which the philosopher implicitly rejected the claim of the Stuart family to the English throne.[25] Both the 1st and 2nd Earls were principally attached to the service of the Crown rather than to a political party; but this attachment stemmed from the ethic of nobility, not from the doctrine of *indefeasible* hereditary right.

If the ideological significance of George III's notion of kingship was unduly dramatised by Victorian writers, it may have been drained of too much of its historical meaning by more recent scholars. John Brooke relegated the issue to a footnote: Horace Walpole's 'belief that George III was educated by disciples of Bolingbroke in arbitrary principles of government is a theme which runs throughout his memoirs, and is entirely imaginary'.[26] In a literal sense, the idea that a Hanoverian heir to the

[23] Chesterfield, *Letters*, vol. 3, pp. 1171, 1202, 1207; vol. 4, pp. 1312, 1408, 1645.
[24] Chesterfield, *Letters*, vol. 4, p. 1758; vol. 5, pp. 1831, 1909; vol. 5, pp. 1998–2005.
[25] Waldegrave's notes from Montesquieu, section 11 below.
[26] Walpole, *George II*, vol. 1, p. 193. The same interpretation is classically to be found in the Introduction to Romney Sedgwick (ed.), *Letters from George III to Lord Bute 1756–1766*

throne was indoctrinated with Stuart doctrines is indeed untrue; but to appreciate the still-vivid nature of these charges, we must recreate a world in which the Jacobite option was only recently still alive, and in which political ideology and daily politics still revolved to a significant degree around dynastic questions.

In 1822 the *Edinburgh Review*, reviewing Waldegrave's *Memoirs* and Walpole's *George II*, sketched the political background:

> The accession of the House of Hanover divided England into two parties – the Whigs, or friends of the new establishment; and the Tories and Jacobites, its secret or avowed opponents. The Tories, bigotted to the notion of indefeasible right in the succession to the Crown, but apprehensive for their religion if a Papist should mount the Throne, were distracted between their scruples about the validity of a Parliamentary settlement, and their fears, lest, in subverting it, they might restore, or pave the way for the restoration of, the Catholic church. Though deterred by their religious fears from embarking decidedly in the cause of the Pretender, they kept on terms with his friends, and were not unwilling to disturb, though they hesitated to overturn, a government they disliked, because it was founded on principles they abhorred. The Jacobites, though most of them were zealous members of the Church of England, had a stronger infusion of bigotry in their composition, and were ready to restore a Popish family, and submit to a Popish Sovereign, rather than own a government founded on a Parliamentary title. It was impossible that either Tories or Jacobites should have the confidence of the Hanoverian Princes; and therefore, while those divisions subsisted, all places of power and profit were in the hands of the Whigs.
>
> Of these two parties, the Tories and Jacobites were the most numerous. They included a certain number of the ancient nobility, and comprehended a very large proportion of the landed interest; and, what gave them in those days a prodigious influence over the common people, a vast majority of the parochial clergy. The University of Oxford was at that time, as it was long after termed by Lord Chatham, a seminary of treason; and its members, dispersed over the kingdom in their different capacities of squires and parsons, retained in their several destinations the zeal and bigotry they had imbibed from their nurse. It may appear surprising, that a party so formidable by its numbers, its influence and its property, should have failed of success. The true solution of the enigma is perhaps given by Lord Orford in his character of Lord Elibank and his brother. 'Both were such active Jacobites, that if the Pretender had succeeded, they could have produced many witnesses to testify their zeal for him; both so cautious, that no witnesses of actual treason could be produced by the government against them; the very sort of Jacobitism that has kept the cause alive, and kept it from succeeding.' If treasonable toasts, drunken bouts, election brawls, mobbing of Dissenters, and idle correspondence, could have brought back the Pretender, the Stuarts would have been restored. But, as the views of the party were irrational, so the zeal of its adherents had more of bluster than firmness in its ingredients. When their spirit was tried by the bold attempt from Scotland to establish their cause by arms, the

(London, 1939) and Ian R. Christie, 'Was there a "New Toryism" in the Earlier Part of George III's Reign?', *Journal of British Studies*, 5 (1965–6), 60–76.

success of the rebels only showed the incapacity of the rival government, and the prudence or faint-heartedness of their English friends.[27]

Recent scholarship has confirmed Horace Walpole's account of the party alignment.

> The opposition to the House of Brunswic was composed partly of principled Jacobites, of Tories, who either knew not what their own principles were, or dissembled them to themselves; and of Whigs, who from hatred of the Minister both acted in concert with the Jacobites, and rejoiced in their assistance.[28]

Lord Holland, editing Walpole's *Memoirs*, commended their subject matter as 'not undeserving our curiosity as it forms the transition from the expiring struggles of Jacobitism to the more important contests that have since engaged, and still occupy our attention'.[29] These dynastic themes, which preoccupied the 1st and 2nd Earls, give a significance to these *Memoirs* which the inadequacy of Lord Holland's edition of 1821 has obscured.

In such a world, the characters of princes assumed a heightened public significance. That of Frederick, Prince of Wales, excited widespread alarm: 'The King's great natural probity and aversion to falsehood, caused him to be greatly disgusted with the mean and insincere temper of the Prince. His little regard to veracity and honor was too early and too much a matter of public notoriety'.[30] With so much at stake, the upbringing of heirs to the throne was inevitably a political issue. The result was predictable: 'Princes have long had the exclusive privilege of being worse educated than all the rest of mankind', quipped Chesterfield.[31] This was not for want of forethought; rather for excess of it. If one literary *genre* produced in ancien regime societies was the Court memoir, another was the manual of instruction for the education of royal pupils. Louis XIV's preceptor was

[27] *The Edinburgh Review* 37 (1822), p. 21.

[28] Paget Toynbee (ed.), *Reminiscences Written by Mr Horace Walpole in 1788* (Oxford, 1924), p. 86.

[29] Horace Walpole, *Memoires of the Last Ten Years of the Reign of George the Second* (ed. Lord Holland, 2 vols., London, 1822), vol. 1, pp. xxvi-xxvii.

[30] Henry Etough, 'Free and Impartial Reflexions on the Character, Life, and Death of Frederick Prince of Wales,' *Miscellanies of the Philobiblon Society* 7 (1862–3), p. 9. Frederick's character reflected a childhood distorted, like that of so many princes, by reason of state. George I, on his accession in 1714, compelled his son George, now Prince of Wales, to reside in England but to leave his son Frederick to be educated as a German prince in Hanover, thereby paving the way for a separation of the two states. Frederick did not see his parents again until after George I's death.

[31] Chesterfield, *Letters*, vol. 5, p. 1982. On this neglected theme, see H.R.H. Prince Chula Chakrabongse of Siam, *The Education of the Enlightened Despots: A Review of the Youth of Louis XV of France, Frederick II of Prussia, Joseph II of Austria, and Catherine II of Russia* (London, 1948); Edward Gregg, 'The Education of Princes: Queen Anne and her Contemporaries' in J.D. Browning (ed.), *Education in the 18th Century* (New York, 1979), pp. 78–97; Derek Beales, *Joseph II*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1987).